

# THE GUARDIAN

Vol.2 No.11 • Serving Madera County Veterans • Nov. 2006

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From Nancy & Tim Murray

Well, here's the photo of the trip to the V.A. Hospital in Oklahoma City. What a huge hospital. And what a tour we got! Both Kim, a new employee to the hospital but not to the field of medicine, and Barbara gave us a tour from one end of the facility to the other. We gave them no more than about an hour's notice that we wanted to come and visit some of the veterans at their facility in order to say "Thank You" by giving them an eagle victory pin and a hug.

What a reception!!! I was overwhelmed. We declined a trip to the intensive care unit but went instead to the infusion lab where we met several patients receiving cancer therapy. They could not believe we came all the way from California to visit with them. We told them that we had just been married the day prior and we got congratulations from everyone. They all received us very well. There were a few tears, many hugs and lots of good wishes. Then we went to the physical therapy unit where we met several more patients who were very welcoming of strangers who had

traveled from California. After this we were escorted to the prosthetics unit where we met several more patients who received us gladly. We gave out several more pins. There was one person who came back to see me a couple of times asking for more pins for friends whom he feared had not received one and he had to make sure that they got one. We gave him several to pass out and he was extremely happy and gave me another hug.

It was at this time that someone said "Hey, you gotta see that man in the lab now." He was busy at the desk with a nurse but we waited for him. Lordy am I glad we waited. He was a Vietnamese person. I proudly told him that my Dad had fought in the Korean war and that my Brother had passed away as

a result of agent orange from the Vietnam war. This man told me he would be dead if my brother and others like him had not been there in Vietnam to fight for them. He cried. I cried. We hugged each other and found some peace.

It was truly an uplifting experience and I am so proud that we were there.



The attached photo (left to right) Kim, Richard Maxey, Chief of Voluntary Services, Nancy Murray, President American Legion Auxillary Unit II, Madera, & Barbara.

**Visit our Web Site at:**

**[www.madera-county.com](http://www.madera-county.com) Go to "Select a Department" then scroll down to "Veterans" At Veteran Resources find back copies**



## Veterans Service Office

**Madera Veterans Office**  
321 W. Yosemite Ave.  
Madera Ca 93637  
Suite 101

### Hours

**Mon., Through Fri. 8-5**  
Dennis Blessing, Service Officer  
**(559) 675-7766**

**Madera Transportation**  
(888) 826-2838 ext 6424  
from Merced ( **72 Hr. Notice** )  
Oakhurst (559) 658-5399

# FROM THE FRONT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE



SECURITY

FENCE -

Soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, build a temporary security fence around an equipment storage building in Muehla Oct. 16, 2006. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl.

## HERO SHADOW BOXES



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# THE VIETNAM WALL



Flowers adorn the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The memorial lists the names of 58,249 dead and missing from the Vietnam War. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA

## TO GET IN TOUCH

Write to the following:  
 Mail Operations/Vietnam Veterans Memorial  
 National Park Service  
 National Capitol Parks-Central  
 900 Ohio Drive, S.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20242

You can obtain further information on special events by writing or calling:

Public Affairs Office

National Park Service / National Capital Parks Region

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20242 (202) 426-6700

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James Finnerty and his wife, Denise, look for names of casualties from Finnerty's unit during Vietnam, the 101st Airborne Division, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., Nov. 9. The Finnertys traveled from Pennsylvania to visit the memorial. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA



**Here I stand in front of the "Wall" in June of 2005. My Grandsons Were with me on the trip to DC but I didn't take them here because I wasn't sure how I would do!**

The first casualty names inscribed were Dale R. Buis and Chester R. Ovnard (this name was a misspelling, it should have read Ovnand) were military advisors, killed on July 8th, 1959 in Bienhoa, while watching a movie in the mess tent. The light had been turned on to change the movie reel and that is when snipers opened fire. The name of the movie was "The Tattered Dress", starring Jeanne Crain. Although 1959 is marked as the beginning on Panel 1, East wall, a Captain (Army) Harry C. Cramer was killed 21 October 1957 during a training action. He is listed on line 78, panel 1, East wall, which was added approximately a year after the Memorial was dedicated. 1975 was the year that the last 18 casualties (Daniel A. Benedett, Lynn Blessing, Walter Boyd, Gregory S. Copenhagen, Andres Garcia, Bernard Gause, Jr., Gary L. Hall, Joseph N. Hargrove, James J. Jacques, Ashton N. Loney, Ronald J. Manning, Danny G. Marshall, James R. Maxwell, Richard W.



DOD casualty lists were compiled during and after the Vietnam War according to criteria set in Executive Order No. 11216, signed by President Johnson on April 24, 1965, designating Vietnam and adjacent coastal waters, within specified geographical coordinates, as a combat zone. As hostilities spread, the combat zone was expanded to include additional areas such as Laos and Cambodia in or over which U.S. forces operated. DOD Instruction 7730.22, "Reports of U.S. Casualties In Combat Areas," January 20, 1967, and March 20, 1973, provided that the casualties to be reported were all those occurring within the designated combat areas and those deaths occurring anywhere as the result or aftermath of an initial casualty occurring in a combat area. In February 1981, DOD supplied the VVMF with a computer database representing the casualty list which included those known dead or missing in action. The list included casualties from battle or hostile causes and those from accidental causes. After a lengthy process of cross checking the lists and working with each branch of the military, the VVMF used its discretion in adding some names that had been overlooked, but which still met the criteria.

The VVMF recognized that names might be added to the memorial after it was constructed and was gratified that DOD set up a mechanism to review individual cases of deaths some months or years after being wounded in Vietnam. Names are added when it has been determined that a service member has died directly from combat-related wounds. Cancer victims of Agent Orange, and post traumatic stress suicides do not fit the criteria for inclusion upon the Memorial. Some have calculated that it would take another two or more entire Walls to include all the names in those two categories alone.



Gary Morrison, of Cape Coral, Fl., kneels in front of the name of James McMahon at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., Nov. 9. Morrison and McMahon joined the Marine Corps together the day after they graduated high school and went through basic training together. McMahon was killed while on a patrol that was coming to help Morrison's unit get out of an ambush in Vietnam. Morrison wears a bracelet engraved with McMahon's name. Morrison said that it's hard for him to come to the Wall, but he wanted to come to honor his comrades. "I wanted to do it out of respect for our fallen heroes," he said. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA

In addition, status changes occur when remains of missing-in-action (MIA) servicemen are identified, an ongoing process conducted by DOD. The VVMF works in conjunction with DOD to determine name additions and status changes and with the National Park Service which operates and maintains the Memorial. The cost of additional inscriptions is paid by the VVMF which has always been funded exclusively by private supporters.

The names are in chronological order, according to the date of casualty within each day, the names are alphabetized. For the dead, the date of casualty is the date they were wounded (received in combat) or injured (received in an accident); for the missing, the date they were reported to be missing. The list starts and ends at the vertex (apex), beginning at the date 1959 (with first two names listed from the date of July 8, 1959) and the inscription (IN HONOR OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR. THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES AND OF THOSE WHO REMAIN MISSING ARE INSCRIBED IN THE ORDER THEY WERE TAKEN FROM US.) on panel 1E and going out to the end of the East wall, appearing to recede into the earth (numbered 70E - May 25, 1968), then resuming at the end of the West wall, as the wall emerges from the earth (numbered 70W - continuing May 25, 1968) and ending with the date of 1975 and its inscription (OUR NATION HONORS THE COURAGE, SACRIFICE AND DEVOTION TO DUTY AND COUNTRY OF ITS VIETNAM VETERANS. THIS MEMORIAL WAS BUILT WITH PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. NOVEMBER 11, 1982) at the bottom of 1W (last 18 names listed are from May

15, 1975). Thus the war's beginning and end meet; the war's complete, coming full circle, yet broken by the earth that bounds the angle's open side and contained within the earth itself. Although 1959 is marked as the beginning on Panel 1, East wall, a Captain (Army) Harry C. Cramer was killed 21 October 1957 during a training action. He is listed on line 78, panel 1, East wall, which was added approximately a year after the Memorial was dedicated. Early in the effort to establish the Vietnam Veterans Memorial it was determined by the veterans that the memorial would contain the permanent inscription of the names of all who died or who remain missing in the war. The inscription



Visitors view the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Nov. 9 in Washington, D.C. The memorial consists of three parts: the Wall of names, the Three Servicemen Statue and flagpole, and the Vietnam Women's Memorial. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA

of the names was the sole mandatory criterion set by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) for designs entered in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition. The list of names came from casualty lists compiled by the Department of Defense (DOD).

With the addition of four names added in 2006 the total is now 58,253 names listed on the Memorial. Approximately 1200 of these are listed as missing (MIA's, POW's, and others).

**During and after the Vietnam war, the Department of Defense compiled a list of combat zone casualties according to criteria in a 1965 Presidential Executive Order. The Executive Order specified Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and coastal areas as a combat zone. If the Department of Defense, acting in accordance with these directives, considered an individual to be a Vietnam conflict fatality or to be missing, his/her name would be included. The VVMF verified the Department of Defense list, where possible, by cross-checking it against the casualty data provided by the individual service branches. Each name was then verified by the National Personnel Records Center, National Archives and Records Service, in St. Louis, Missouri. After computer processing, the names were checked manually for errors.**



The Memorial (wall) was designed by an undergraduate at Yale University, Maya Ying Lin, born in Athens, Ohio in 1959. Her parents fled from China in 1949 when Mao-Tse-tung took control of China, and she is a native-born American citizen. She acted as a consultant with the architectural firm of Cooper- Lecky Partnership on the construction of the Memorial. She wanted to create a park within a park - a quiet protected place onto itself, yet harmonious with the overall plan of Constitution Gardens. The walls have a mirror-like surface (polished black granite) reflecting the images of the surrounding trees, lawns, monuments, and visitors. The walls seem to stretch into the distance, directing us towards the Washington Monument, in

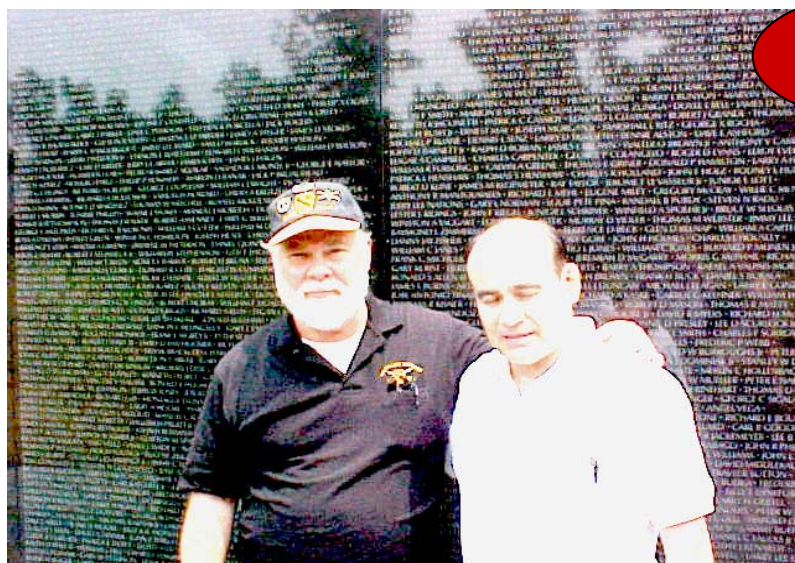


Nikki Elkind, of Fort Collins, Colo., and Margaret Adams, of Oxford, England, view the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., Nov. 9. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA

the east, and the Lincoln Memorial, to the west, thus bring the Vietnam Veterans Memorial into a historical context.

Yes, it does, along with the names of the officers of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, architects, etc., on a panel at the apex of the curb along the top of the Memorial.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF) raised nearly \$9,000,000 entirely through private contributions from corporations, foundations, unions, veterans and civic organizations and more than 275,000 individual Americans. No Federal funds were needed.



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This is myself and John Burman who had been in the 2nd Platoon in 1966 with me in front of about five names from B Company 1/7 Cav 2nd Platoon who were KIA May 6th 1966 in Bong Son. John has since published his book "*Dog Tapes of Courage*". A great book with even a couple of pictures of me in the book.

**There were four criteria for the design of the “Wall”:**

- 1. be reflective and contemplative in character;**
- 2. harmonize with its surroundings;**
- 3. contain the names of those who had died in the conflict or who were still missing;**
- 4. make no political statement about the war.**

VVMF announced in October, 1980, that the Memorial's design would be selected through a national design competition open to any U.S. citizen 18 years of age or older. By December 29, 1980, 2,573 individuals and teams had applied for registration forms. By the deadline of March 31, 1981, 1,421 design entries had been submitted. All entries were judged anonymously by a jury of eight internationally recognized artists and designers, who had been selected by VVMF. The winning design was chosen on May 1, 1981. The designs were displayed at an airport hangar at Andrews Air Force Base for the selection committee, in rows covering more than 35,000 square feet of floor space. Each entry was identified by number only, to preserve the anonymity of their authors. All entries were examined by each juror; the entries were narrowed down to 232, finally 39. The jury selected Entry Number 1026 as it clearly met the spirit and formal requirements of the program. They felt its open nature would encourage access on all occasions, at all hours, without barriers, and yet free the visitors from the noise and traffic of the surrounding city.

On March 11, 1982, the design and plans received final Federal approval, and work at the site was begun on March 16, 1982. Groundbreaking took place on March 26, 1982. The Gilbane Building Company acted as the general contractor, and the architectural firm of Cooper-Lecky Partnership supervised the construction. The Memorial (wall) was completed in late October and dedicated on November 13, 1982, climaxing a week-long salute to Vietnam veterans.



Daniel V. Miller, a Vietnam veteran and a member of the USMC Combat Helicopter Association, makes a rubbing of the name of Thomas Lenz at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., Nov. 9. Miller, who travelled from Chapel Hill, N.C., to visit the memorial, served with Lenz during his tour in Vietnam. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA



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John and I standing in front of the “Three Rifelmen”. John was on a machine gun crew and remembers me well. In his book John writes “I kept watching the ground and thinking about what had happened back at the rice paddy. I felt something blunt hit my helmet, and a voice said ‘keep your head and eyes up; Charlie’s not in the dirt’

Looking up I recognized that it was Dennis Blessing. It really was an art to learn to walk on

uneven soil with a heavy load, keeping your head up and your eyes constantly scanning all around for signs of danger’.

The 2nd platoon of B Company 1st Bn 7th Cav went from 34 members to 12 during this battle.

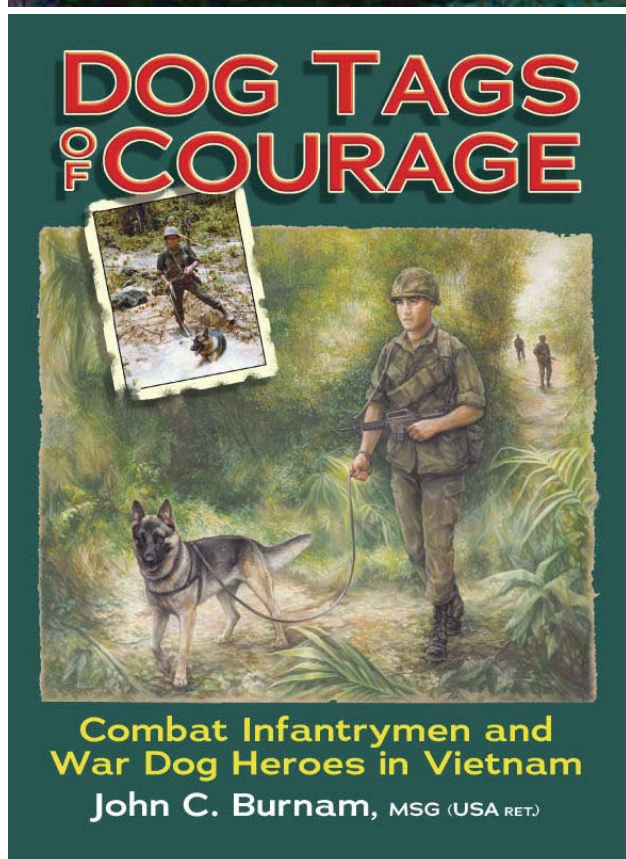
John and I were lucky that day but later John hit one of those bamboo punji stakes and was in the hospital in Japan for over six months. It was great to see John in our Nations Capital and visit our Comrades on the “Wall”.



The Three Servicemen Statue overlooks the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., Nov. 9. Photo by Sgt. Sara Wood, USA

The walls and landscaping were completed by November 1, 1982. On November 11, 1984, all three units (the wall, the statue, and the flag) were combined. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF) officially transferred control of the Memorial to the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior and it became a national monument. The now completed Vietnam Veterans Memorial was accepted by the President of the United States on November 10, 1984





On the left is Johns' new book about his Vietnam experience and a little about mine.

John retired from the Army as a MSG, I "retired" after three years as a sergeant. The first few chapters of Johns book are about the Seventh Cavalry then the book details Johns life as a Scout Platoon Dog Handler. Picture above is John taking a rubbing of one of the 2nd Platoon troopers KIA on May 6, 1966 in Binn Din province, Bong Son.

**PLEASE FIND BELOW THE TROOPERS LOST IN BONG SON FROM THE SECOND PLATOON, MAY 6, 1966 AND WHERE THEY CAN BE FOUND ON THE "WALL"**

Sgt Reese Devereaux KIA May 6, 1966 07E-33  
 Sp4 Robert Engberson KIA May 6, 1966 07E-34  
 Sgt Leonard Henry KIA May 6, 1966 07E-34  
 Sgt Earl S. Shelton KIA May 6, 1966 07E-37





4877 E Norwich Ave Fresno, California 93726 559-291-1239

**VETERANS MAGAZINES FALL EVENTS**

*William E Dietzel, Publisher / Editor*

[info@veteransmagazine.com](mailto:info@veteransmagazine.com)

**OCTOBER 31, 2006** VETERANS SHOW YOUR SUPPORT BY

**ATTENDING THE FRESNO CITY COUNCIL MEETING.**

Wear your colors and support this bill at

Fresno City Council meeting on 9:30 am October 31, 2006

**“ Dignity for Military Funerals Act 2006**

CA File 1888.8 a new ordinance restricting protest activities at military funerals will be present to the Fresno City Council on Tuesday, October 31, 2006.

This is a Fresno Municipal Code making it unlawful in the City of Fresno for any person to engage in protest activities within 300 feet of a cemetery, mortuary, or Church beginning one-hour before and one hour after the funeral of a member of the United States Armed Forces or (Veterans) former members of the military service.

In less than two weeks the nation will recognize a very important holiday, Veterans Day. Fresno does much to honor those who have protected our freedoms and has one of the largest Veterans Day Parade in the nation.

As you may know, there are extremist groups that have attempted to interfere with the solemn moments by doing what they can to disrupt a military funeral

What is before you today is a request to add an ordinance to our Municipal Code that would insure that extremist groups would not be allowed to get close enough to the funeral of a Veteran or a member of the United States Armed Forces to create any disruption.

The 300 foot buffer zone is patterned after existing “ court tested” ordinances and laws that have kept protesters 300 feet away from other activities deemed protected by the courts.

VETERANS YOUR SUPPORT AT THE FRESNO CITY COUNCIL MEETING IS REQUESTED Fresno City Council Meeting Tuesday, October 31, 2006

Information contact: Charles Waters 559-281-0083

## **VETERANS WEEK November 4-11 2006**

### **NOVEMBER 4, 2006 RALLY AROUND OUR VETERANS**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2006 8:00 pm SAVE-MART CENTER  
Fresno Falcons VS Long Beach Ice Dogs  
First 3000 Fans Receive a Free Rally Towel!  
VETERANS TICKETS ONLY \$7.00**

**Veterans will be honored on the ice by the Fresno Falcons**

**Contact: Charles Water has 200 free tickets 281-0083**



### **NOVEMBER 9, 2006**

Each year Club One honors the Veterans with an outstanding luncheon

|                                      |                 |                            |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>First luncheon will start at</b>  | <b>11:30 AM</b> | <b>160 maximum seating</b> |
| <b>Second luncheon will start at</b> | <b>12:30 PM</b> | <b>160 maximum seating</b> |

**Please RSVP to Club One: 497-3012**

***Veterans Magazine, Inc proudly presents***

**NOVEMBER 10, 2006**

***William E Dietzel, Chairman***





## **“WARRIORS MEDAL OF VALOR CEREMONY”**

**NOVEMBER 10, 2006**

**11:00 AM**

**Chukchansi Park**

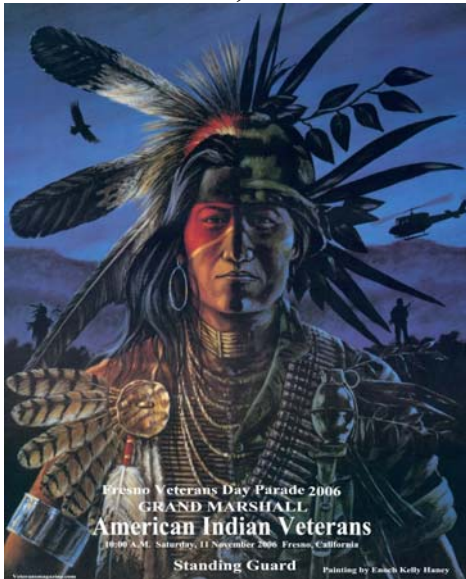
**“H” Street and Tulare Street**

**Downtown Fresno, California**

450 Veterans have signed up to receive the Warriors Medal of Valor. This will be of the largest veterans events in central California and we invite you to register today and be part of this outstanding event. Web site to register: [www.veteransmagazine.com](http://www.veteransmagazine.com) or call 559-291-1239 for a registration form

**NOVEMBER 11, 2006**

*William E Dietzel, Chairman*



## **WELCOME TO THE 87<sup>TH</sup> VETERANS DAY PARADE 1918-2006**

**FRESNO VETERANS DAY PARADE**

*City of Fresno, California*

***Saturday: November 11, 2006 10:00 am.***

**GRAND MARSHALL AMERICAN INDIAN VETERANS**

Confirm your participation and reserve a space now!

# THE GUARDIAN

SERVING MADERA COUNTY VETERANS



## News You Can Use

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

VA Regional Office, Oakland

1-800-827-1000

VA Life Insurance Center

1-800-669-8477

VA Medical Center Toll Free (Fresno)

1-888-826-2838

Cal-Vet Home Loan Information, (Fresno)

559-440-5132

Patient Advocate (Fresno VA)\*\*

Ext. 6970

Telephone Advice Nurse (Fresno VA)\*\*

Ext. 6933

Outpatient Clinic – Merced/Atwater (Castle)

209-381-0105

Service Representative: (DAV, Fresno VA)\*\*

Ext. 5642

Service Representative: (VFW, Fresno VA)\*\*

Ext. 5647

Service Representative: (AMVETS, Fresno VA)\*\*

Ext. 5816

Service Representative: (American Legion,  
Fresno VA)\*\*

Ext. 5648

\*\*Fresno VA Pharmacy, (to order 14 days before  
you run out call by touch tone phone)\*\*

559-225-6100 Ext. 5333

CVSO Madera County (pager) D. Blessing

559-661-6895

Fresno Vet Center (Fresno)

559-487-5660

Transportation to VA Medical appointments

\*\* Call VA Fresno toll free number first

1-888-826-2838 ext. 6424